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Creek Nation
Muskogee
Brother in Red
Muskogee Phoenix

Ella M. Robinson,
Interviewer,
September 20, 1937.

Life and Experiences of an Indian Territory
Newspaper man, Matthew Moore
Interview given by sister, Mrs. J. B. White
21st and Elgin, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

My brother was born at Hacket City, Sebastian County, Arkansas, September 2, 1859. He was the son of Reverend F. M. Moore, a Methodist Itinerant Minister, and Amanda Stephens Moore.

We lived in Hacket City as small children, and about 1868 our father was sent to a church at Booneville, Arkansas, where we lived for a number of years. Matthew attended the high school there, known as the Fort Smith district high school. Father had great hopes that he would go to college with the purpose of entering the ministry, but in that he was disappointed.

Father owned a newspaper at Booneville called the Booneville Enterprise and possessing a mechanical mind, Matthew became interested in the work of printing and learning to set type at an early age. Father also owned a drug store at Booneville where my brother spent some time, but the drug business did not appeal to him as did the newspaper work. Having arrived at the point where he

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felt that he was competent to edit a paper, Matthew bought a half interest in the Enterprise. Father later sold the other half interest in the paper and moved to Winter Haven, Florida, where he bought an orange grove.

In 1884, while Matthew was living in Booneville, he married but his young wife died at the end of five years. As his health was not good, he too sold his interests in Booneville and went to Florida, hoping the warm climate would be beneficial to him, but was disappointed as the climate did not agree with him.

He then went to Nashville, Tennessee, where he again engaged in newspaper work.

In the fall of 1891, father was transferred to the Indian Mission Conference, now the Oklahoma Conference, and stationed at Eufaula. After staying there for two years, he came to Muskogee and took charge of the Brother in Red, a church paper published in the interest of the Methodist Church, South.

In 1895, Matthew came to Muskogee, recovering from several months severe illness at Nashville, Tennessee. He had had great trouble and suffered much from headache

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and during his illness had allowed his hair to grow long, he said as a protection and to keep his head warm. He wore his hair braided and wound around his head under his hat. Matthew was of a quiet and reserved nature, almost to the point of eccentricity, largely due to years of ill health and living alone.

On coming to Muskogee, his health was greatly improved and he at once secured employment on the Muskogee Phoenix, then a weekly, as head of the mechanical department and was known among the men as "the main guy" around the plant. When the Phoenix became a Daily in 1901, he served as editor for some time until Clarence B. Douglas became the owner. With him on the staff were Edwin Demming, who is still a member; Ed Melton now of California; Joe Frishman; and John Dillard Wilson of Fort Smith. In 1903, Matthew contributed a notable feature when he compiled and published the first city directory ever gotten out in Muskogee. It was an alphabetically arranged list of business firms, citizens, schools and churches. It also contained an official, benevolent, and social directory. It was found to be indispensable to all business houses and had a ready sale of \$3.00 per copy. It was copyrighted by him in 1906.

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After he resigned from his work on the Phoenix he purchased a printing press and continued to publish the city directory until his death. He had established a clientele and continued to furnish them with the copies, regardless of the fact that there was another company publishing directories.

His death occurred on July 11, 1918, at his home on South Cherokee Street, Muskogee.